

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/784,913

Examiner

X L Bautista

Applicant(s)

LEE ET AL.

Art Unit

2179

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 12/8/04.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-31.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 13 September 2001 and 08 December 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

X L Bautista
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 2179

DETAILED ACTION

Reasons for Allowance

1. Claims 1-31 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claims 1 and 31 have been carefully considered. Prior art of record fails to teach the combination of claimed elements including a graphical user interface (GUI) for having a plurality of visual categories, each category divided into subcategories of ordered levels of specificity, each level of specificity grouped into visual districts, which are represented as shapes and contain visual subcategories of the same level of specificity, as recited in claims 1 and 31. Prior art of record fails to teach a visual map of a Web site relating to the semantic organization of product classes and degree of specificity about the products; the GUI providing a visual closeness among multiple items in different categories; the Web site map providing information about the people, activities and social interactions occurring at the Web site.

Mitchell et al (US 6,628,304 B2) discloses a graphical user interface (GUI) to manage, view and navigate relationships between objects having hierarchical relationships with one another. The GUI includes a locale map that provides users with indication of where in the hierarchy the objects exist; the locale map allows users

to move up and down by selecting the node at a desired level; the objects displayed on the GUI are depicted graphically as being interconnected to other objects.

Tesler (US 6,111,578) discloses a system for generating a partial hierarchy such that parent nodes are not forced apart to make room for child nodes. Partial hierarchies are generated to allow greater number of nodes closest to the user to be displayed without sacrificing quick and smooth navigation through the overall hierarchy.

Wong et al (US 6,708,172) discloses a web browsing environment that provides a graphical spatial context to associate web sites to one another. The environment has a shared multiple browser format that is analogous to being in a city which is alive with people, activities, and commerce. The users may browse a continuous space within a spatial context among other users. Information and people are visually represented in the form of character proxies. Users can participate in group events and interact with other users browsing the space.

Mao Lin HUANG et al (article entitled, "WebOFDAV-----navigating and visualizing the Web on-line with animated context swapping") discloses a method for navigating that helps the user by providing a visual aid to guide the Web traversal and by maintaining the map of the view while the user navigates the Web. The method calculates and maintains a small local visualization on-line corresponding to

the change of the user's focus. The method enables the user to explore the Web space without requiring the whole Web graph to be known. Huang discloses that groups of people may interact while shopping for goods and services. Huang teaches that the Web space (community) may be structured in fine segments to appeal to people's narrow interests (communities and multiple subcommunities).

Mitchell, Tesler, Wong, and Huang fail to teach or suggest visual categories (semantic structures) divided into visual subcategories of ordered levels of specificity; visual districts, represented as shapes, containing visual subcategories of the same levels of specificity.

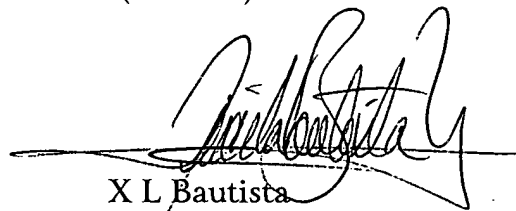
Conclusion

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to X L Bautista whose telephone number is (571) 272-4132. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8:00AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Herndon can be reached on (7571) 272-4136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

5. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'X L Bautista', is written over a horizontal line.

X L Bautista
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2179

xlb
31 March 2005